AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application: What is claimed is:

1.   (Currently amended) A method for downloading up-to-date versions of selected <u>plurality of different</u> software from a plurality of software vendors over a network and for installing the <u>up-to-date versions of selected plurality of</u> software to a hardware unit, the network comprising a first software handling machine configured to execute a download manager, a second software handling machine configured to execute a download supervisor and a plurality of download servers for downloading the <u>up-to-date versions of selected plurality of</u> software from the plurality of vendors, the method comprising:

associating, by said download manager, a transaction identifier with selection data indicating the selected <u>plurality of different</u> software for which <u>said</u> up-to-date versions <u>of selected plurality of software</u> are to be downloaded, said selection data being determined at the time of sale of the hardware unit<u>, and wherein said selected plurality of different software includes a plurality of software that were pre-configured into the hardware unit at or before the time of sale of the hardware unit</u>;

sending a download transaction request comprising the transaction identifier from the download manager to the download supervisor; and

responsive to determining, by the download supervisor, that the requested download transaction is authorized, performing the steps of:

assembling, by the download supervisor, a download/installation instruction comprising up-to-date software access information for the selected <u>plurality of different</u> software;

communicating the download/installation instruction from the download supervisor to the download manager; and

performing, by the download manager, a download and installation of the up-to-date versions of selected plurality of different software to the hardware unit pursuant to the download/installation instruction.

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the transaction identifier comprises a serial number of the hardware unit.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the software access information comprises a network address for a download server.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the first software handling machine comprises the hardware unit, and wherein said selected plurality of different software includes a plurality of software that are added on after the time of sale of the hardware unit.

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the download manager executes in a boot sequence of the first software handling machine.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the download manager loads from a removable storage media.

7. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the first software handling machine comprises a personal computer.

8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the download manager launches from the hardware unit.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the download manager launches in a boot sequence of the hardware unit.

10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 8 wherein the download manager sends a

download transaction request comprising a predetermined selection of software.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the hardware unit is linked to the first software handling machine by a dedicated communications link.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the download manager executes upon detecting that the hardware on the dedicated communications link.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the hardware unit is linked to the first software handling machine over a network comprising a local area network.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising storing a record of the download transaction in a central database.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein data comprising the transaction identifier is encrypted.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the selection data is determined in whole or in part in an interactive process.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 further comprising obtaining the selection data by a point of sale application.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein obtaining the selection data by a point of sale application comprises providing an automated kiosk for selecting software and recording the selections for a download transaction.

22. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the selection data is determined in whole or in part by looking up the transaction identifier in a central database.

23. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein determining whether the download transaction is authorized comprises evaluating the transaction identifier.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising interrogating the hardware unit to obtain information ~~comprising preexisting software~~ regarding the plurality of software that were pre-configured into the hardware unit at or before the time of sale of the hardware unit.

25. (Original) The method of claim 24 wherein interrogating the hardware unit to obtain information comprising preexisting software comprises executing a Desktop Management Interface.

26. (Original) The method of claim 24 further comprising modifying the selection data in response to the information comprising preexisting software.

27. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the software access information comprises [[an]] a plurality of authentication [[code]] codes for activating or downloading ~~software~~ said up-to-date versions of selected plurality of different software from a plurality of software vendors.

28. (Currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein the authentication [[code]] codes are [[is]] provided by an authentication subsystem of the download supervisor.

29. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising storing download transaction data to a central database.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29 wherein the download transaction data comprises a download transaction status.

31. (Original) The method of claim 29 wherein the download transaction status comprises a transaction hold status.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31 wherein communicating a download/installation instruction from the download supervisor to the download manager is held in abeyance while a transaction is in a hold status.

33. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the software is data comprising music, images, and video.

34. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the software is data comprising data related to services.

35. (Currently amended) A system for downloading software to a hardware unit from a plurality of vendors over a network, the system comprising:

a plurality of software vendor download servers in the network for providing up-to-date versions of selected plurality of software from the plurality of software vendors;

a first software handling machine in the network and linked to the hardware unit, the first software handling machine executing a download manager, the download manager initiating a download/installation transaction comprising selected plurality of software to be downloaded to the hardware unit from one or more of the plurality of download servers, sending a transaction identifier in a download transaction request to a download supervisor over the network, and downloading and installing the selected plurality of software to the hardware unit pursuant to a download/installation instruction received in response to the download transaction request, said selected plurality of software being determined at the time of sale of the hardware unit; and

a second software handling machine in the network executing the download supervisor, the download supervisor determining whether the download transaction request is authorized, and, in response to determining that the transaction is authorized, assembling a download/installation

instruction comprising up-to-date software access information for the selected <u>plurality of</u> software and to send the download/installation instruction to the download manager;

wherein the first software handling machine linked to the hardware unit by an external bus, and wherein the download manager executes upon detecting that the hardware unit is linked to the first software handling machine by said external bus.

36. (Currently amended) The system of claim 35 wherein the software access information comprises [[an]] <u>a plurality of</u> authentication [[code]] <u>codes for a plurality of encryption methods to download from a plurality of download servers</u>.

37. (Currently amended) The system of claim 35, wherein the download manager [[is]] executes on the hardware unit.

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Currently amended) The system of claim 35, wherein the software access information comprises [[an]]<u> a plurality of</u> authentication [[code]] <u>codes to activate</u> <s>for activating</s> <u>a plurality of</u> software and a network address for downloading software.

40. (Previously presented) The system of claim 35 wherein the software is data comprising music, images, and video.

41. (Original) The system of claim 35 wherein the software is data comprising data related to services.

42. (Currently amended) A hardware unit <s>configured</s> to execute a download manager capable of downloading and installing up-to-date versions of selected <u>plurality of</u> software from a plurality of software vendors download servers in a network, comprising:

means to initiate the download manager during a boot sequence of the hardware unit;

means to provide a transaction identifier and software selection data indicating the selected plurality of software for which up-to-date versions are to be downloaded to a download supervisor in the network to enable the download supervisor to identify and validate the download transaction, said software selection data being determined at the time of sale of the hardware unit;

means to receive a communication from the download supervisor comprising a download/installation instruction that includes up-to-date software access information for the selected plurality of software of the download transaction; and

means to perform the download and installation of the up-to-date versions of the selected plurality of software to the hardware unit according to the download/installation instruction.

43. (Original) The hardware unit of claim 42 wherein the means to initiate the download manager during a boot sequence of the hardware unit comprises executing a bootstrap loader to establish basic connectivity and download functions for the hardware unit in order to load a program to which the bootstrap loader hand off control.

44. (Currently amended) The hardware unit of claim 42 wherein the selected plurality of software may be selected or modified by a user in an interactive process.

45. (Currently amended) The hardware unit of claim 42 wherein the selected plurality of software comprises a predetermined selection.

46. – 52. (Cancelled)

53. (Previously presented) The system of claim 35, further comprising an automated kiosk running a point of sale application for allowing a user to select said plurality of software at the time of sale of the hardware unit, and recording said plurality of software selections to said first software handling machine.